

In the claims:

For the convenience of the Examiner, all claims being examined, whether or not amended, are presented below.

Please cancel, without prejudice, claims 13-15, 17-21, 23-28, and 35-51.

1. **(Previously presented)** An isolated and/or recombinantly produced polypeptide comprising a sequence at least 98 percent identical to either SEQ ID No: 17 or an N-terminal fragment of SEQ ID No: 17 having a molecular weight of about 19 kD, which polypeptide binds to a *patched* protein or promotes proliferation of testicular germ line cells.
2. **(Previously presented)** An isolated and/or recombinantly produced polypeptide consisting essentially of a sequence at least 98 percent identical to either SEQ ID No: 17 or an N-terminal fragment of SEQ ID No: 17 having a molecular weight of about 19 kD, which polypeptide binds to a *patched* protein or promotes proliferation of testicular germ line cells.
3. **(Previously presented)** An isolated and/or recombinantly produced polypeptide comprising a sequence identical to either SEQ ID No: 17 or an N-terminal fragment of SEQ ID No: 17 having a molecular weight of about 19 kD, which polypeptide binds to a *patched* protein or promotes proliferation of testicular germ line cells.
4. **(Previously presented)** An isolated and/or recombinantly produced polypeptide consisting essentially of a sequence identical to either SEQ ID No: 17 or an N-terminal fragment of SEQ ID No: 17 having a molecular weight of about 19 kD, which polypeptide binds to a *patched* protein or promotes proliferation of testicular germ line cells.
5. **(Cancelled)**
6. **(Cancelled)**

7. **(Previously presented)** The polypeptide of any of claims 1-4, wherein said polypeptide binds to *patched* and promotes *hedgehog* signal transduction.

8. **(Cancelled)**

9. **(Previously presented)** The polypeptide of claim 7, wherein the binding of the polypeptide to *patched* results in upregulation of *patched* and/or *gli* expression.

10-32. **(Cancelled)**

33. **(Previously presented)** The polypeptide of any of claims 1-4, formulated in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

34. **(Previously presented)** The polypeptide of any of claims 1-4, wherein the polypeptide is purified to at least 80% by dry weight.

35-51. **(Cancelled)**